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EVANGELINE

A TALE OF ACADIE

BY

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW



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EVANGELINE

THIS is the forest primeval. The murmuring
pines and the hemlocks,
Bearded with moss, and in garments green, indis-
tinct in the twilight,
Stand like Druids of e^ld, with voices sad and pro-
phetic,
Stand like harpers hoar, with beards that rest on
their bosoms.
Loud from its rocky caverns, the deep-voiced neigh-
boring ocean
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the
wail of the forest.

This is the forest primeval ; but where are the
hearts that beneath it
Leaped like the roe, when he hears in the wood-
land the voice of the huntsman ?
Where is the thatch-roofed village, the home of
Acadian farmers, —
Men whose lives glided on like rivers that water
the woodlands,

Darkened by shadows of earth, but reflecting an
image of heaven ?
Waste are those pleasant farms, and the farmers
forever departed !
Scattered like dust and leaves, when the mighty
blasts of October
Seize them, and whirl them aloft, and sprinkle
them far o'er the ocean.
Naught but tradition remains of the beautiful vil-
lage of Grand-Pré.

Ye who believe in affection that hopes, and en-
dures, and is patient,
Ye who believe in the beauty and strength of
woman's devotion,
List to the mournful tradition still sung by the
pines of the forest ;
List to a Tale of Love in Acadie, home of the
happy.

PART THE FIRST

I.

IN the Acadian land, on the shores of the Basin
of Minas,
Distant, secluded, still, the little village of Grand-
Pré
Lay in the fruitful valley. Vast meadows stretched
to the eastward,
Giving the village its name, and pasture to flocks
without number.
Dikes, that the hands of the farmers had raised
with labor incessant,
Shut out the turbulent tides; but at stated sea-
sons the flood-gates
Opened, and welcomed the sea to wander at will
o'er the meadows.
West and south there were fields of flax, and
orchards and cornfields
Spreading afar and unfenced o'er the plain; and
away to the northward
Blomidon rose, and the forests old, and aloft on
the mountains

Sea-fogs pitched their tents, and mists from the mighty Atlantic
Looked on 'the happy valley, but ne'er from their station descended.
There, in the midst of its farms, reposed the Acadian village.
Strongly built were the houses, with frames of oak and of chestnut,
Such as the peasants of Normandy built in the reign of the Henries.
Thatched were the roofs, with dormer-windows, and gables projecting
Over the basement below, protected and shaded the door-way.
There in the tranquil evenings of summer, when brightly the sunset
Lighted the village street, and gilded the vanes on the chimneys,
Matrons and maidens sat in snow-white caps and in kirtles
Scarlet and blue and green, with distaffs spinning the golden
Flax for the gossiping looms, whose noisy shuttles within doors
Mingled their sound with the whir of the wheels and the songs of the maidens.
Solemnly down the street came the parish priest, and the children
Paused in their play to kiss the hand he extended to bless them.

Reverend walked he among them ; and up rose
matrons and maidens,
Hailing his slow approach with words of affection-
ate welcome.

Then came the laborers home from the field, and
serenely the sun sank
Down to his rest, and twilight prevailed. Anon
from the belfry

Softly the Angelus sounded, and over the roofs of
the village

Columns of pale blue smoke, like clouds of incense
ascending,

Rose from a hundred hearths, the homes of peace
and contentment.

Thus dwelt together in love these simple Acadian
farmers,—

Dwelt in the love of God and of man. Alike
were they free from
Fear, that reigns with the tyrant, and envy, the
vice of republics.

Neither locks had they to their doors, nor bars to
their windows ;

But their dwellings were open as day and the
hearts of the owners ;

There the richest was poor, and the poorest lived
in abundance.

Somewhat apart from the village, and nearer
the Basin of Minas,

Benedict Bellefontaine, the wealthiest farmer of
Grand-Pré,
Dwelt on his goodly acres ; and with him, directing
his household,
Gentle Evangeline lived, his child, and the pride
of the village.
Stalworth and stately in form was the man of sev-
enty winters ;
Hearty and hale was he, an oak that is covered
with snow-flakes ;
White as the snow were his locks, and his cheeks
as brown as the oak-leaves.
Fair was she to behold, that maiden of seventeen
summers.
Black were her eyes as the berry that grows on
the thorn by the wayside,
Black, yet how softly they gleamed beneath the
brown shade of her tresses !
Sweet was her breath as the breath of kine that
feed in the meadows.
When in the harvest heat she bore to the reapers
at noon-tide
Flagons of home-brewed ale, ah ! fair in sooth was
the maiden.
Fairer was she when, on Sunday morn, while the
bell from its turret
Sprinkled with holy sounds the air, as the priest
with his hyssop
Sprinkles the congregation, and scatters blessings
upon them,

Down the long street she passed, with her chaplet
of beads and her missal,
Wearing her Norman cap, and her kirtle of blue,
and the ear-rings,
Brought in the olden time from France, and since,
as an heirloom,
Handed down from mother to child, through long
generations.
But a celestial brightness — a more ethereal beau-
ty —
Shone on her face and encircled her form, when,
after confession,
Homeward serenely she walked with God's bene-
diction upon her.
When she had passed, it seemed like the ceasing
of exquisite music.

Firmly builded with rafters of oak, the house of
the farmer
Stood on the side of a hill commanding the sea ;
and a shady
Sycamore grew by the door, with a woodbine
wreathing around it.
Rudely carved was the porch, with seats beneath ;
, and a footpath
Led through an orchard wide, and disappeared in
the meadow.
Under the sycamore-tree were hives overhung by
a penthouse,

Such as the traveller sees in regions remote by the roadside,
Built o'er a box for the poor, or the blessed image of Mary.
Farther down, on the slope of the hill, was the well with its moss-grown bucket, fastened with iron, and near it a trough for the horses.
Shielding the house from storms, on the north, were the barns and the farm-yard;
There stood the broad-wheeled wains and the antique ploughs and the harrows;
There were the folds for the sheep; and there, in his feathered seraglio,
Strutted the lordly turkey, and crowed the cock, with the selfsame voice that in ages of old had startled the penitent Peter.
Bursting with hay were the barns, themselves a village. In each one Far o'er the gable projected a roof of thatch; and a staircase, Under the sheltering eaves, led up to the odorous corn-loft.
There too the dove-cot stood, with its meek and innocent inmates Murmuring ever of love; while above in the variant breezes Numberless noisy weathercocks rattled and sang of mutation.

Thus, at peace with God and the world, the
farmer of Grand-Pré
Lived on his sunny farm, and Evangeline governed
his household.
Many a youth, as he knelt in the church and
opened his missal,
Fixed his eyes upon her, as the saint of his deepest
devotion ;
Happy was he who might touch her hand or the
hem of her garment !
Many a suitor came to her door, by the darkness
befriended,
And, as he knocked and waited to hear the sound
of her footsteps,
Knew not which beat the louder, his heart or the
knocker of iron ;
Or at the joyous feast of the Patron Saint of the
village,
Bolder grew, and pressed her hand in the dance as
he whispered
Hurried words of love, that seemed a part of the
music.
But, among all who came, young Gabriel only was
welcome ;
Gabriel Lajeunesse, the son of Basil the black-
smith,
Who was a mighty man in the village, and honored
of all men ;
For, since the birth of time, throughout all ages
and nations,

Has the craft of the smith been held in repute by
the people.

Basil was Benedict's friend. Their children from
earliest childhood

Grew up together as brother and sister; and
Father Felician,

Priest and pedagogue both in the village, had
taught them their letters

Out of the selfsame book, with the hymns of the
church and the plain-song.

But when the hymn was sung, and the daily lesson
completed,

Swiftly they hurried away to the forge of Basil the
blacksmith.

There at the door they stood, with wondering eyes
to behold him

Take in his leathern lap the hoof of the horse as
a plaything,

Nailing the shoe in its place; while near him the
tire of the cart-wheel

Lay like a fiery snake, coiled round in a circle of
cinders.

Oft on autumnal eves, when without in the gather-
ing darkness

Bursting with light seemed the smithy, through
every cranny and crevice,

Warm by the forge within they watched the labor-
ing bellows,

And as its panting ceased, and the sparks expired
in the ashes,

Merrily laughed, and said they were nuns going
into the chapel.

Oft on sledges in winter, as swift as the swoop of
the eagle,

Down the hillside bounding, they glided away o'er
the meadow.

Oft in the barns they climbed to the populous nests
on the rafters,

Seeking with eager eyes that wondrous stone,
which the swallow

Brings from the shore of the sea to restore the
sight of its fledglings ;

Lucky was he who found that stone in the nest of
the swallow !

Thus passed a few swift years, and they no longer
were children.

He was a valiant youth, and his face, like the face
of the morning,

Gladdened the earth with its light, and ripened
thought into action.

She was a woman now, with the heart and hopes
of a woman.

“ Sunshine of Saint Eulalie ” was she called ; for
that was the sunshine

Which, as the farmers believed, would load their
orchards with apples ;

She, too, would bring to her husband's house
delight and abundance,

Filling it full of love and the ruddy faces of children.

II.

Now had the season returned, when the nights
grow colder and longer,
And the retreating sun the sign of the Scorpion
enters.
Birds of passage sailed through the leaden air,
from the ice-bound,
Desolate northern bays to the shores of tropical
islands.
Harvests were gathered in ; and wild with the
winds of September
Wrestled the trees of the forest, as Jacob of old
with the angel.
All the signs foretold a winter long and inclem-
ent.
Bees, with prophetic instinct of want, had hoarded
their honey
Till the hives overflowed ; and the Indian hunters
asserted
Cold would the winter be, for thick was the fur of
the foxes.
Such was the advent of autumn. Then followed
that beautiful season,
Called by the pious Acadian peasants the Summer
of All-Saints !

Filled was the air with a dreamy and magical light ;
and the landscape

Lay as if new-created in all the freshness of child-hood.

Peace seemed to reign upon earth, and the restless
heart of the ocean

Was for a moment consoled. All sounds were in
harmony blended.

Voices of children at play, the crowing of cocks in
the farm-yards,

Whir of wings in the drowsy air, and the cooing
of pigeons,

All were subdued and low as the murmurs of love,
and the great sun

Looked with the eye of love through the golden
vapors around him ;

While arrayed in its robes of russet and scarlet
and yellow,

Bright with the sheen of the dew, each glittering
tree of the forest

Flashed like the plane-tree the Persian adorned
with mantles and jewels.

Now recommenced the reign of rest and affec-tion and stillness.

Day with its burden and heat had departed, and
twilight descending

Brought back the evening star to the sky, and the
herds to the homestead.

Pawing the ground they came, and resting their
 necks on each other,
And with their nostrils distended inhaling the
 freshness of evening.
Foremost, bearing the bell, Evangeline's beautiful
 heifer,
Proud of her snow-white hide, and the ribbon that
 waved from her collar,
Quietly paced and slow, as if conscious of human
 affection.
Then came the shepherd back with his bleating
 flocks from the seaside,
Where was their favorite pasture. Behind them
 followed the watch-dog,
Patient, full of importance, and grand in the pride
 of his instinct,
Walking from side to side with a lordly air, and
 superbly
Waving his bushy tail, and urging forward the
 stragglers ;
Regent of flocks was he when the shepherd slept ;
 their protector,
When from the forest at night, through the starry
 silence, the wolves howled.
Late, with the rising moon, returned the wains
 from the marshes,
Laden with briny hay, that filled the air with its
 odor.
Cheerily neighed the steeds, with dew on their
 manes and their fetlocks,

While aloft on their shoulders the wooden and
ponderous saddles,
Painted with brilliant dyes, and adorned with
tassels of crimson,
Nodded in bright array, like hollyhocks heavy with
blossoms.
Patiently stood the cows meanwhile, and yielded
their udders
Unto the milkmaid's hand; whilst loud and in
regular cadence
Into the sounding pails the foaming streamlets
descended.
Lowing of cattle and peals of laughter were heard
in the farm-yard,
Echoed back by the barns. Anon they sank into
stillness;
Heavily closed, with a jarring sound, the valves of
the barn-doors,
Rattled the wooden bars, and all for a season was
silent.

In-doors, warm by the wide-mouthed fireplace,
idly the farmer
Sat in his elbow-chair, and watched how the flames
and the smoke-wreaths
Struggled together like foes in a burning city.
Behind him,
Nodding and mocking along the wall, with ges-
tures fantastic,

Darted his own huge shadow, and vanished away
into darkness.

Faces, clumsily carved in oak, on the back of his
arm-chair

Laughed in the flickering light, and the pewter
plates on the dresser

Caught and reflected the flame, as shields of armies
the sunshine.

Fragments of song the old man sang, and carols of
Christmas,

Such as at home, in the olden time, his fathers
before him

Sang in their Norman orchards and bright Bur-
gundian vineyards.

Close at her father's side was the gentle Evan-
geline seated,

Spinning flax for the loom, that stood in the corner
behind her.

Silent awhile were its treadles, at rest was its
diligent shuttle,

While the monotonous drone of the wheel, like the
drone of a bagpipe,

Followed the old man's song, and united the frag-
ments together.

As in a church, when the chant of the choir at
intervals ceases,

Footfalls are heard in the aisles, or words of the
priest at the altar,

So, in each pause of the song, with measured
motion the clock clicked.

Thus as they sat, there were footsteps heard,
and, suddenly lifted,
Sounded the wooden latch, and the door swung
back on its hinges.
Benedict knew by the hob-nailed shoes it was
Basil the blacksmith,
And by her beating heart Evangeline knew who
was with him.
“Welcome!” the farmer exclaimed, as their foot-
steps paused on the threshold,
“Welcome, Basil, my friend! Come, take thy
place on the settle
Close by the chimney-side, which is always empty
without thee;
Take from the shelf overhead thy pipe and the box
of tobacco;
Never so much thyself art thou as when through
the curling
Smoke of the pipe or the forge thy friendly and
jovial face gleams
Round and red as the harvest moon through the
mist of the marshes.”
Then, with a smile of content, thus answered Basil
the blacksmith,
Taking with easy air the accustomed seat by the
fireside:—
“Benedict Bellefontaine, thou hast ever thy jest
and thy ballad!
Ever in cheerfulness mood art thou, when others are
filled with

Gloomy forebodings of ill, and see only ruin before them.
Happy art thou, as if every day thou hadst picked up a horseshoe.”
Pausing a moment, to take the pipe that Evangeline brought him,
And with a coal from the embers had lighted, he slowly continued :—
“Four days now are passed since the English ships at their anchors Ride in the Gaspereau’s mouth, with their cannon pointed against us.
What their design may be is unknown ; but all are commanded
On the morrow to meet in the church, where his Majesty’s mandate
Will be proclaimed as law in the land. Alas ! in the mean time
Many surmises of evil alarm the hearts of the people.”
Then made answer the farmer :— “Perhaps some friendlier purpose
Brings these ships to our shores. Perhaps the harvests in England
By untimely rains or untimelier heat have been blighted,
And from our bursting barns they would feed their cattle and children.”
“Not so thinketh the folk in the village,” said, warmly, the blacksmith,

Shaking his head, as in doubt ; then, heaving a sigh, he continued :—

“ Louisburg is not forgotten, nor Beau Séjour, nor Port Royal.

Many already have fled to the forest, and lurk on its outskirts,

Waiting with anxious hearts the dubious fate of to-morrow.

Arms have been taken from us, and warlike weapons of all kinds ;

Nothing is left but the blacksmith’s sledge and the scythe of the mower.”

Then with a pleasant smile made answer the jovial farmer :—

“ Safer are we unarmed, in the midst of our flocks and our cornfields,

Safer within these peaceful dikes, besieged by the ocean,

Than our fathers in forts, besieged by the enemy’s cannon.

Fear no evil, my friend, and to-night may no shadow of sorrow

Fall on this house and hearth ; for this is the night of the contract.

Built are the house and the barn. The merry lads of the village

Strongly have built them and well ; and, breaking the glebe round about them,

Filled the barn with hay, and the house with food for a twelvemonth.

René Leblanc will be here anon, with his papers
and inkhorn.
Shall we not then be glad, and rejoice in the joy
of our children?"
As apart by the window she stood, with her hand
in her lover's,
Blushing Evangeline heard the words that her
father had spoken,
And, as they died on his lips, the worthy notary
entered.

III.

BENT like a laboring oar, that toils in the surf of
the ocean,
Bent, but not broken, by age was the form of the
notary public ;
Shocks of yellow hair, like the silken floss of the
maize, hung
Over his shoulders ; his forehead was high ; and
glasses with horn bows
Sat astride on his nose, with a look of wisdom
supernal.
Father of twenty children was he, and more than a
hundred
Children's children rode on his knee, and heard
his great watch tick.

Four long years in the times of the war had he languished a captive,
Suffering much in an old French fort as the friend of the English.
Now, though warier grown, without all guile or suspicion,
Ripe in wisdom was he, but patient, and simple, and childlike.
He was beloved by all, and most of all by the children ;
For he told them tales of the Loup-garou in the forest,
And of the goblin that came in the night to water the horses,
And of the white Létiche, the ghost of a child who unchristened
Died, and was doomed to haunt unseen the chambers of children ;
And how on Christmas eve the oxen talked in the stable,
And how the fever was cured by a spider shut up in a nutshell,
And of the marvellous powers of four-leaved clover and horseshoes,
With whatsoever else was writ in the lore of the village.
Then up rose from his seat by the fireside Basil the blacksmith,
Knocked from his pipe the ashes, and slowly extending his right hand,

“Father Leblanc,” he exclaimed, “thou hast heard
the talk in the village,
And, perchance, canst tell us some news of these
ships and their errand.”
Then with modest demeanor made answer the no-
tary public,—
“Gossip enough have I heard, in sooth, yet am
never the wiser ;
And what their errand may be I know not better
than others.
Yet am I not of those who imagine some evil inten-
tion
Brings them here, for we are at peace ; and why
then molest us ?”
“God’s name !” shouted the hasty and somewhat
irascible blacksmith ;
“Must we in all things look for the how, and the
why, and the wherefore ?
Daily injustice is done, and might is the right of
the strongest !”
But, without heeding his warmth, continued the
notary public,—
“Man is unjust, but God is just ; and finally jus-
tice
Triumphs ; and well I remember a story, that often
consoled me,
When as a captive I lay in the old French fort at
Port Royal.”
This was the old man’s favorite tale, and he loved
to repeat it

When his neighbors complained that any injustice
was done them.

“Once in an ancient city, whose name I no longer
remember,

Raised aloft on a column, a brazen statue of Jus-
tice

Stood in the public square, upholding the scales in
its left hand,

And in its right a sword, as an emblem that justice
presided

Over the laws of the land, and the hearts and
homes of the people.

Even the birds had built their nests in the scales
of the balance,

Having no fear of the sword that flashed in the
sunshine above them.

But in the course of time the laws of the land were
corrupted ;

Might took the place of right, and the weak were
oppressed, and the mighty

Ruled with an iron rod. Then it chanced in a
nobleman’s palace

That a necklace of pearls was lost, and ere long a
suspicion

Fell on an orphan girl who lived as maid in the
household.

She, after form of trial condemned to die on the
scaffold,

Patiently met her doom at the foot of the statue of
Justice.

As to her Father in heaven her innocent spirit
ascended,
Lo! o'er the city a tempest rose ; and the bolts of
the thunder
Smote the statue of bronze, and hurled in wrath
from its left hand
Down on the pavement below the clattering scales
of the balance,
And in the hollow thereof was found the nest of a
magpie,
Into whose clay-built walls the necklace of pearls
was inwoven.”
Silenced, but not convinced, when the story was
ended, the blacksmith
Stood like a man who fain would speak, but findeth
no language ;
All his thoughts were congealed into lines on his
face, as the vapors
Freeze in fantastic shapes on the window-panes
in the winter.

Then Evangeline lighted the brazen lamp on the
table,
Filled, till it overflowed, the pewter tankard with
home-brewed
Nut-brown ale, that was famed for its strength in
the village of Grand-Pré ;
While from his pocket the notary drew his papers
and inkhorn,

Wrote with a steady hand the date and the age of
the parties,
Naming the dower of the bride in flocks of sheep
and in cattle.
Orderly all things proceeded, and duly and well
were completed,
And the great seal of the law was set like a sun on
the margin.
Then from his leathern pouch the farmer threw on
the table
Three times the old man's fee in solid pieces of
silver ;
And the notary rising, and blessing the bride and
the bridegroom,
Lifted aloft the tankard of ale and drank to their
welfare.
Wiping the foam from his lip, he solemnly bowed
and departed,
While in silence the others sat and mused by the
fireside,
Till Evangeline brought the draught-board out of
its corner.
Soon was the game begun. In friendly contention
the old men
Laughed at each lucky hit, or unsuccessful ma-
nœuvre,
Laughed when a man was crowned, or a breach
was made in the king-row.
Meanwhile apart, in the twilight gloom of a win-
dow's embrasure,

Sat the lovers, and whispered together, beholding
the moon rise
Over the pallid sea and the silvery mist of the
meadows.
Silently one by one, in the infinite meadows of
heaven,
Blossomed the lovely stars, the forget-me-nots of
the angels.

Thus was the evening passed. Anon the bell
from the belfry
Rang out the hour of nine, the village curfew, and
straightway
Rose the guests and departed ; and silence reigned
in the household.
Many a farewell word and sweet good-night on the
door-step
Lingered long in Evangeline's heart, and filled it
with gladness.
Carefully then were covered the embers that glowed
on the hearth-stone,
And on the oaken stairs resounded the tread of the
farmer.
Soon with a soundless step the foot of Evangeline
followed.
Up the staircase moved a luminous space in the
darkness,
Lighted less by the lamp than the shining face of
the maiden.

Silent she passed the hall, and entered the door of
her chamber.

Simple that chamber was, with its curtains of
white, and its clothes-press

Ample and high, on whose spacious shelves were
carefully folded

Linen and woollen stuffs, by the hand of Evangeline
woven.

This was the precious dower she would bring to
her husband in marriage,

Better than flocks and herds, being proofs of her
skill as a housewife.

Soon she extinguished her lamp, for the mellow
and radiant moonlight

Streamed through the windows, and lighted the
room, till the heart of the maiden

Swelled and obeyed its power, like the tremulous
tides of the ocean.

Ah! she was fair, exceeding fair to behold, as she
stood with

Naked snow-white feet on the gleaming floor of her
chamber!

Little she dreamed that below, among the trees of
the orchard,

Waited her lover and watched for the gleam of her
lamp and her shadow.

Yet were her thoughts of him, and at times a feel-
ing of sadness

Passed o'er her soul, as the sailing shade of clouds
in the moonlight

Flitted across the floor and darkened the room for
a moment.
And, as she gazed from the window, she saw se-
renely the moon pass
Forth from the folds of a cloud, and one star fol-
low her footsteps,
As out of Abraham's tent young Ishmael wandered
with Hagar !

I V.

PLEASANTLY rose next morn the sun on the village
of Grand-Pré.
Pleasantly gleamed in the soft, sweet air the Basin
of Minas,
Where the ships, with their wavering shadows, were
riding at anchor.
Life had long been astir in the village, and clamor-
ous labor
'Knocked with its hundred hands at the golden
gates of the morning.
Now from the country around, from the farms and
neighboring hamlets,
Came in their holiday dresses the blithe Acadian
peasants.
Many a glad good-morrow and jocund laugh from
the young folk

Made the bright air brighter, as up from the numerous meadows,

Where no path could be seen but the track of wheels in the greensward,

Group after group appeared, and joined, or passed on the highway.

Long ere noon, in the village all sounds of labor were silenced.

Thronged were the streets with people ; and noisy groups at the house-doors

Sat in the cheerful sun, and rejoiced and gossiped together.

Every house was an inn, where all were welcomed and feasted ;

For with this simple people, who lived like brothers together,

All things were held in common, and what one had was another's.

Yet under Benedict's roof hospitality seemed more abundant :

For Evangeline stood among the guests of her father ;

Bright was her face with smiles, and words of welcome and gladness

Fell from her beautiful lips, and blessed the cup as she gave it.

Under the open sky, in the odorous air of the orchard,

Stript of its golden fruit, was spread the feast of betrothal.
There in the shade of the porch were the priest and the notary seated ;
There good Benedict sat, and sturdy Basil the blacksmith.
Not far withdrawn from these, by the cider-press and the beehives,
Michael the fiddler was placed, with the gayest of hearts and of waistcoats.
Shadow and light from the leaves alternately played on his snow-white
Hair, as it waved in the wind ; and the jolly face of the fiddler
Glowed like a living coal when the ashes are blown from the embers.
Gayly the old man sang to the vibrant sound of his fiddle,
Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres, and Le Carillon de Dunkerque,
And anon with his wooden shoes beat time to the music.
Merrily, merrily whirled the wheels of the dizzying dances
Under the orchard-trees and down the path to the meadows ;
Old folk and young together, and children mingled among them.
Fairest of all the maids was Evangeline, Benedict's daughter !

Noblest of all the youths was Gabriel, son of the
blacksmith !

So passed the morning away. And lo ! with a
summons sonorous
Sounded the bell from its tower, and over the
meadows a drum beat.
Thronged ere long was the church with men. Without, in the churchyard,
Waited the women. They stood by the graves,
and hung on the headstones
Garlands of autumn-leaves and evergreens fresh
from the forest.
Then came the guard from the ships, and marching
proudly among them
Entered the sacred portal. With loud and disso-
nant clangor
Echoed the sound of their brazen drums from ceil-
ing and casement,—
Echoed a moment only, and slowly the ponderous
portal
Closed, and in silence the crowd awaited the will
of the soldiers.
Then uprose their commander, and spake from the
steps of the altar,
Holding aloft in his hands, with its seals, the royal
commission.
“ You are convened this day,” he said, “ by his
Majesty’s orders.

Clement and kind has he been ; but how you have
answered his kindness,
Let your own hearts reply ! To my natural make
and my temper
Painful the task is I do, which to you I know must
be grievous.
Yet must I bow and obey, and deliver the will of
our monarch ;
Namely, that all your lands, and dwellings, and cat-
tle of all kinds
Forfeited be to the crown ; and that you yourselves
from this province
Be transported to other lands. God grant you may
dwell there
Ever as faithful subjects, a happy and peaceable
people !
Prisoners now I declare you ; for such is his Majes-
ty's pleasure ! ”
As, when the air is serene in the sultry solstice of
summer,
Suddenly gathers a storm, and the deadly sling of
the hailstones
Beats down the farmer's corn in the field and shat-
ters his windows,
Hiding the sun, and strewing the ground with
thatch from the house-roofs,
Bellowing fly the herds, and seek to break their en-
closures ;
So on the hearts of the people descended the words
of the speaker.

Silent a moment they stood in speechless wonder,
and then rose
Louder and ever louder a wail of sorrow and anger,
And, by one impulse moved, they madly rushed to
the door-way.
Vain was the hope of escape ; and cries and fierce
imprecations
Rang through the house of prayer ; and high o'er
the heads of the others
Rose, with his arms uplifted, the figure of Basil the
blacksmith,
As, on a stormy sea, a spar is tossed by the bil-
lows.
Flushed was his face and distorted with passion ;
and wildly he shouted, —
“ Down with the tyrants of England ! we never
have sworn them allegiance !
Death to these foreign soldiers, who seize on our
homes and our harvests ! ”
More he fain would have said, but the merciless
hand of a soldier
Smote him upon the mouth, and dragged him down
to the pavement.

In the midst of the strife and tumult of angry
contention,
Lo ! the door of the chancel opened, and Father
Felician

Entered, with serious mien, and ascended the steps
of the altar.

Raising his reverend hand, with a gesture he awed
into silence

All that clamorous throng ; and thus he spake to
his people ;

Deep were his tones and solemn ; in accents meas-
ured and mournful

Spake he, as, after the tocsin's alarum, distinctly
the clock strikes.

“What is this that ye do, my children ? what mad-
ness has seized you ?

Forty years of my life have I labored among you,
and taught you,

Not in word alone, but in deed, to love one
another !

Is this the fruit of my toils, of my vigils and prayers
and privations ?

Have you so soon forgotten all lessons of love and
forgiveness ?

This is the house of the Prince of Peace, and would
you profane it

Thus with violent deeds and hearts overflowing
with hatred ?

Lo ! where the crucified Christ from his cross is
gazing upon you !

See ! in those sorrowful eyes what meekness and
holy compassion !

Hark ! how those lips still repeat the prayer, ‘O
Father, forgive them !’

Let us repeat that prayer in the hour when the
wicked assail us,

Let us repeat it now, and say, 'O Father, forgive
them !'"

Few were his words of rebuke, but deep in the
hearts of his people

Sank they, and sobs of contrition succeeded the
passionate outbreak,

While they repeated his prayer, and said, "O Fa-
ther, forgive them !"

Then came the evening service. The tapers
gleamed from the altar.

Fervent and deep was the voice of the priest, and
the people responded,

Not with their lips alone, but their hearts ; and the
Ave Maria

Sang they, and fell on their knees, and their souls,
with devotion translated,

Rose on the ardor of prayer, like Elijah ascending
to heaven.

Meanwhile had spread in the village the tidings
of ill, and on all sides

Wandered, wailing, from house to house the women
and children.

Long at her father's door *Evangeline* stood, with
her right hand

Shielding her eyes from the level rays of the sun,
that, descending,

Lighted the village street with mysterious splendor,
and roofed each
Peasant's cottage with golden thatch, and embla-
zoned its windows.
Long within had been spread the snow-white cloth
on the table ;
There stood the wheaten loaf, and the honey fra-
grant with wild-flowers ;
There stood the tankard of ale, and the cheese
fresh brought from the dairy ;
And, at the head of the board, the great arm-chair
of the farmer.
Thus did Evangeline wait at her father's door, as
the sunset
Threw the long shadows of trees o'er the broad
ambrosial meadows.
Ah ! on her spirit within a deeper shadow had
fallen,
And from the fields of her soul a fragrance celestial
ascended, —
Charity, meekness, love, and hope, and forgiveness,
and patience !
Then, allForgetful of self, she wandered into the
village,
Cheering with looks and words the mournful hearts
of the women,
As o'er the darkening fields with lingering steps
they departed.
Urged by their household cares, and the weary feet
of their children.

Down sank the great red sun, and in golden, glim-
mering vapors

Veiled the light of his face, like the Prophet de-
scending from Sinai.

Sweetly over the village the bell of the Angelus
sounded.

Meanwhile, amid the gloom, by the church Evan-
geline lingered.

All was silent within ; and in vain at the door and
the windows

Stood she, and listened and looked, till, overcome
by emotion,

“Gabriel !” cried she aloud with tremulous voice ;
but no answer

Came from the graves of the dead, nor the gloomier
grave of the living.

Slowly at length she returned to the tenantless
house of her father.

Smouldered the fire on the hearth, on the board
was the supper untasted,

Empty and drear was each room, and haunted with
phantoms of terror.

Sadly echoed her step on the stair and the floor of
her chamber.

In the dead of the night she heard the disconsolate
rain fall

Loud on the withered leaves of the sycamore-tree
by the window.

Keenly the lightning flashed ; and the voice of the
echoing thunder
Told her that God was in heaven, and governed
the world he created !
Then she remembered the tale she had heard of
the justice of Heaven ;
Soothed was her troubled soul, and she peacefully
slumbered till morning.

V.

FOUR times the sun had risen and set ; and now
on the fifth day
Cheerily called the cock to the sleeping maids of
the farm-house.
Soon o'er the yellow fields, in silent and mournful
procession,
Came from the neighboring hamlets and farms the
Acadian women,
Driving in ponderous wains their household goods
to the sea-shore,
Pausing and looking back to gaze once more on
their dwellings,
Ere they were shut from sight by the winding road
and the woodland.
Close at their sides their children ran, and urged
on the oxen,

While in their little hands they clasped some fragments of playthings.

Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth they hurried ;
and there on the sea-beach

Piled in confusion lay the household goods of the peasants.

All day long between the shore and the ships did the boats ply ;

All day long the wains came laboring down from the village.

Late in the afternoon, when the sun was near to his setting,

Echoed far o'er the fields came the roll of drums from the churchyard.

Thither the women and children thronged. On a sudden the church-doors

Opened, and forth came the guard, and marching in gloomy procession

Followed the long-imprisoned, but patient, Acadian farmers.

Even as pilgrims, who journey afar from their homes and their country,

Sing as they go, and in singing forget they are weary and wayworn,

So with songs on their lips the Acadian peasants descended

Down from the church to the shore, amid their wives and their daughters.

Foremost the young men came ; and, raising together their voices,
Sang with tremulous lips a chant of the Catholic
Missions :—
“ Sacred heart of the Saviour ! O inexhaustible
fountain !
Fill our hearts this day with strength and submis-
sion and patience ! ”
Then the old men, as they marched, and the
women that stood by the wayside
Joined in the sacred psalm, and the birds in the
sunshine above them
Mingled their notes therewith, like voices of spirits
departed.

Half-way down to the shore Evangeline waited
in silence,
Not overcome with grief, but strong in the hour of
affliction, —
Calmly and sadly she waited, until the procession
approached her,
And she beheld the face of Gabriel pale with emo-
tion.
Tears then filled her eyes, and, eagerly running to
meet him,
Clasped she his hands, and laid her head on his
shoulder, and whispered, —
“ Gabriel ! be of good cheer ! for if we love one
another,

Nothing, in truth, can harm us, whatever mis-
chances may happen!"

Smiling she spake these words; then suddenly
paused, for her father

Saw she slowly advancing. Alas! how changed
was his aspect!

Gone was the glow from his cheek, and the fire
from his eye, and his footstep

Heavier seemed with the weight of the heavy heart
in his bosom.

But with a smile and a sigh, she clasped his neck
and embraced him,

Speaking words of endearment where words of
comfort availed not.

Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth moved on that
mournful procession.

There disorder prevailed, and the tumult and stir
of embarking.

Busily plied the freighted boats; and in the confu-
sion

Wives were torn from their husbands, and mothers,
too late, saw their children

Left on the land, extending their arms, with wildest
entreating.

So unto separate ships were Basil and Gabriel car-
ried,

While in despair on the shore Evangeline stood
with her father.

Half the task was not done when the sun went
down, and the twilight
Deepened and darkened around ; and in haste the
refluent ocean
Fled away from the shore, and left the line of the
sand-beach
Covered with waifs of the tide, with kelp and the
slippery sea-weed.
Farther back in the midst of the household goods
and the wagons,
Like to a gypsy camp, or a leaguer after a bat-
tle,
All escape cut off by the sea, and the sentinels
near them,
Lay encamped for the night the houseless Acadian
farmers.
Back to its nethermost caves retreated the bellow-
ing ocean,
Dragging adown the beach the rattling pebbles,
and leaving
Inland and far up the shore the stranded boats of
the sailors.
Then, as the night descended, the herds returned
from their pastures ;
Sweet was the moist still air with the odor of milk
from their udders ;
Lowing they waited, and long, at the well-known
bars of the farm-yard, —
Waited and looked in vain for the voice and the
hand of the milkmaid.

Silence reigned in the streets ; from the church no
Angelus sounded,
Rose no smoke from the roofs, and gleamed no
lights from the windows.

But on the shores meanwhile the evening fires
had been kindled,
Built of the drift-wood thrown on the sands from
wrecks in the tempest.
Round them shapes of gloom and sorrowful faces
were gathered,
Voices of women were heard, and of men, and the
crying of children.
Onward from fire to fire, as from hearth to hearth
in his parish,
Wandered the faithful priest, consoling and bless-
ing and cheering,
Like unto shipwrecked Paul on Melita's desolate
sea-shore.
Thus he approached the place where *Evangeline*
sat with her father,
And in the flickering light beheld the face of the
old man,
Haggard and hollow and wan, and without either
thought or emotion,
E'en as the face of a clock from which the hands
have been taken.
Vainly *Evangeline* strove with words and caresses
to cheer him,

Vainly offered him food ; yet he moved not, he
looked not, he spake not,
But, with a vacant stare, ever gazed at the flicker-
ing fire-light.

“*Benedicite !*” murmured the priest, in tones of
compassion.

More he fain would have said, but his heart was
full, and his accents

Faltered and paused on his lips, as the feet of a
child on a threshold,

Hushed by the scene he beholds, and the awful
presence of sorrow.

Silently, therefore, he laid his hand on the head of
the maiden,

Raising his tearful eyes to the silent stars that
above them

Moved on their way, unperturbed by the wrongs
and sorrows of mortals.

Then sat he down at her side, and they wept to-
gether in silence.

Suddenly rose from the south a light, as in au-
tumn the blood-red
Moon climbs the crystal walls of heaven, and o'er
the horizon
Titan-like stretches its hundred hands upon moun-
tain and meadow,
Seizing the rocks and the rivers, and piling huge
shadows together.

Broader and ever broader it gleamed on the roofs
of the village,
Gleamed on the sky and the sea, and the ships that
lay in the roadstead.
Columns of shining smoke uprose, and flashes of
flame were
Thrust through their folds and withdrawn, like the
quivering hands of a martyr.
Then as the wind seized the gleeds and the burn-
ing thatch, and, uplifting,
Whirled them aloft through the air, at once from a
hundred house-tops
Started the sheeted smoke with flashes of flame in-
termingled.

These things beheld in dismay the crowd on the
shore and on shipboard.
Speechless at first they stood, then cried aloud in
their anguish,
“We shall behold no more our homes in the village
of Grand-Pré !”
Loud on a sudden the cocks began to crow in the
farm-yards,
Thinking the day had dawned ; and anon the low-
ing of cattle
Came on the evening breeze, by the barking of
dogs interrupted.
Then rose a sound of dread, such as startles the
sleeping encampments

Far in the western prairies or forests that skirt the
Nebraska,
When the wild horses affrighted sweep by with the
speed of the whirlwind,
Or the loud bellowing herds of buffaloes rush to
the river.
Such was the sound that arose on the night, as the
herds and the horses
Broke through their folds and fences, and madly
rushed o'er the meadows.

Overwhelmed with the sight, yet speechless, the
priest and the maiden
Gazed on the scene of terror that reddened and
widened before them ;
And as they turned at length to speak to their
silent companion,
Lo ! from his seat he had fallen, and stretched
abroad on the sea-shore
Motionless lay his form, from which the soul had
departed.
Slowly the priest uplifted the lifeless head, and the
maiden
Knelt at her father's side, and wailed aloud in her
terror.
Then in a swoon she sank, and lay with her head
on his bosom.
Through the long night she lay in deep, oblivious
slumber ;

And when she woke from the trance, she beheld a
multitude near her.
Faces of friends she beheld, that were mournfully
gazing upon her,
Pallid, with tearful eyes, and looks of saddest com-
passion.
Still the blaze of the burning village illumined the
landscape,
Reddened the sky overhead, and gleamed on the
faces around her,
And like the day of doom it seemed to her wavering
senses.
Then a familiar voice she heard, as it said to the
people, —
“Let us bury him here by the sea. When a hap-
pier season
Brings us again to our homes from the unknown
land of our exile,
Then shall his sacred dust be piously laid in the
churchyard.”
Such were the words of the priest. And there in
haste by the sea-side,
Having the glare of the burning village for funeral
torches,
But without bell or book, they buried the farmer of
Grand-Pré.
And as the voice of the priest repeated the service
of sorrow,
Lo! with a mournful sound, like the voice of a vast
congregation,

Solemnly answered the sea, and mingled its roar
with the dirges.
'T was the returning tide, that afar from the waste
of the ocean,
With the first dawn of the day, came heaving and
hurrying landward.
Then recommenced once more the stir and noise
of embarking ;
And with the ebb of the tide the ships sailed out
of the harbor,
Leaving behind them the dead on the shore, and
the village in ruins.

PART THE SECOND

I.

MANY a weary year had passed since the
burning of Grand-Pré,
When on the falling tide the freighted vessels de-
parted,
Bearing a nation, with all its household gods, into
exile,
Exile without an end, and without an example in
story.
Far asunder, on separate coasts, the Acadians
landed ;
Scattered were they, like flakes of snow, when the
wind from the northeast
Strikes aslant through the fogs that darken the
Banks of Newfoundland.
Friendless, homeless, hopeless, they wandered from
city to city,
From the cold lakes of the North to sultry Southern
savannas, —
From the bleak shores of the sea to the lands where
the Father of Waters

Seizes the hills in his hands, and drags them down
to the ocean,
Deep in their sands to bury the scattered bones of
the mammoth.
Friends they sought and homes ; and many, de-
spairing, heart-broken,
Asked of the earth but a grave, and no longer a
friend nor a fireside.
Written their history stands on tablets of stone in
the churchyards.
Long among them was seen a maiden who waited
and wandered,
Lowly and meek in spirit, and patiently suffering
all things.
Fair was she and young ; but, alas ! before her
extended,
Dreary and vast and silent, the desert of life, with
its pathway
Marked by the graves of those who had sorrowed
and suffered before her,
Passions long extinguished, and hopes long dead
and abandoned,
As the emigrant's way o'er the Western desert is
marked by
Camp-fires long consumed, and bones that bleach
in the sunshine.
Something there was in her life incomplete, imper-
fect, unfinished ;
As if a morning of June, with all its music and sun-
shine,

Suddenly paused in the sky, and, fading, slowly
descended
Into the east again, from whence it late had aris-
en.
Sometimes she lingered in towns, till, urged by the
fever within her,
Urged by a restless longing, the hunger and thirst
of the spirit,
She would commence again her endless search and
endeavor ;
Sometimes in churchyards strayed, and gazed on
the crosses and tombstones,
Sat by some nameless grave, and thought that per-
haps in its bosom
He was already at rest, and she longed to slumber
beside him.
Sometimes a rumor, a hearsay, an inarticulate whis-
per,
Came with its airy hand to point and beckon her
forward.
Sometimes she spake with those who had seen her
beloved and known him,
But it was long ago, in some far-off place or forgot-
ten.
“Gabriel Lajeunesse !” they said ; “O yes ! we
have seen him.
He was with Basil the blacksmith, and both have
gone to the prairies ;
Coureurs-des-Bois are they, and famous hunters
and trappers.”

“Gabriel Lajeunesse!” said others; “O yes! we
have seen him.

He is a Voyageur in the lowlands of Louisiana.”

Then would they say, “Dear child! why dream
and wait for him longer?

Are there not other youths as fair as Gabriel?
others

Who have hearts as tender and true, and spirits as
loyal?

Here is Baptiste Leblanc, the notary’s son, who has
loved thee

Many a tedious year; come, give him thy hand and
be happy!

Thou art too fair to be left to braid St. Catherine’s
tresses.”

Then would Evangeline answer, serenely but sadly, “I cannot!

Whither my heart has gone, there follows my hand,
and not elsewhere.

For when the heart goes before, like a lamp, and
illumines the pathway,

Many things are made clear, that else lie hidden in
darkness.”

Thereupon the priest, her friend and father-confessor,

Said, with a smile, “O daughter! thy God thus
speaketh within thee!

Talk not of wasted affection, affection never was
wasted;

If it enrich not the heart of another, its waters,
 returning
Back to their springs, like the rain, shall fill them
 full of refreshment ;
That which the fountain sends forth returns again
 to the fountain.
Patience ; accomplish thy labor ; accomplish thy
 work of affection !
Sorrow and silence are strong, and patient endur-
 ance is godlike.
Therefore accomplish thy labor of love, till the
 heart is made godlike,
Purified, strengthened, perfected, and rendered
 more worthy of heaven ! ”
Cheered by the good man’s words, *Evangeline*
 labored and waited.
Still in her heart she heard the funeral dirge of the
 ocean,
But with its sound there was mingled a voice that
 whispered, “ Despair not ! ”
Thus did that poor soul wander in want and cheer-
 less discomfort,
Bleeding, barefooted, over the shards and thorns
 of existence.
Let me essay, O Muse ! to follow the wanderer’s
 footsteps ;—
Not through each devious path, each changeful year
 of existence ;
But as a traveller follows a streamlet’s course
 through the valley :

Far from its margin at times, and seeing the gleam
of its water
Here and there, in some open space, and at inter-
vals only ;
Then drawing nearer its banks, through sylvan
glooms that conceal it,
Though he behold it not, he can hear its continuous
murmur ;
Happy, at length, if he find the spot where it reach-
es an outlet.

II.

IT was the month of May. Far down the Beautiful
River,
Past the Ohio shore and past the mouth of the Wa-
bash,
Into the golden stream of the broad and swift Mis-
sissippi,
Floated a cumbrous boat, that was rowed by Aca-
dian boatmen.
It was a band of exiles : a raft, as it were, from the
shipwrecked
Nation, scattered along the coast, now floating to-
gether,
Bound by the bonds of a common belief and a
common misfortune ;

Men and women and children, who, guided by
 hope or by hearsay,
Sought for their kith and their kin among the few-
 acred farmers
On the Acadian coast, and the prairies of fair Ope-
 lousas.
With them *Evangeline* went, and her guide, the
 Father Felician.
Onward o'er sunken sands, through a wilderness
 sombre with forests,
Day after day they glided adown the turbulent
 river ;
Night after night, by their blazing fires, encamped
 on its borders.
Now through rushing chutes, among green islands,
 where plumelike
Cotton-trees nodded their shadowy crests, they
 swept with the current,
Then emerged into broad lagoons, where silvery
 sand-bars
Lay in the stream, and along the wimpling waves
 of their margin,
Shining with snow-white plumes, large flocks of
 pelicans waded.
Level the landscape grew, and along the shores of
 the river,
Shaded by china-trees, in the midst of luxuriant
 gardens,
Stood the houses of planters, with negro-cabins and
 dove-cots.

They were approaching the region where reigns
perpetual summer,
Where through the Golden Coast, and groves of
orange and citron,
Sweeps with majestic curve the river away to the
eastward.
They, too, swerved from their course ; and, entering
the Bayou of Plaquemine,
Soon were lost in a maze of sluggish and devious
waters,
Which, like a network of steel, extended in every
direction.
Over their heads the towering and tenebrous
boughs of the cypress
Met in a dusky arch, and trailing mosses in mid
air
Waved like banners that hang on the walls of an-
cient cathedrals.
Deathlike the silence seemed, and unbroken, save
by the herons
Home to their roosts in the cedar-trees returning
at sunset,
Or by the owl, as he greeted the moon with demo-
niac laughter.
Lovely the moonlight was as it glanced and gleamed
on the water,
Gleamed on the columns of cypress and cedar sus-
taining the arches,
Down through whose broken vaults it fell as
through chinks in a ruin.

Dreamlike, and indistinct, and strange were all
things around them ;
And o'er their spirits there came a feeling of won-
der and sadness,—
Strange forebodings of ill, unseen and that cannot
be compassed.
As, at the tramp of a horse's hoof on the turf of the
prairies,
Far in advance are closed the leaves of the shrink-
ing mimosa,
So, at the hoof-beats of fate, with sad forebodings
of evil,
Shrinks and closes the heart, ere the stroke of
doom has attained it.
But Evangeline's heart was sustained by a vision,
that faintly
Floated before her eyes, and beckoned her on
through the moonlight.
It was the thought of her brain that assumed the
shape of a phantom.
Through those shadowy aisles had Gabriel wan-
dered before her,
And every stroke of the oar now brought him
nearer and nearer.

Then in his place, at the prow of the boat, rose
one of the oarsmen,
And, as a signal sound, if others like them perad-
venture

Sailed on those gloomy and midnight streams,
blew a blast on his bugle.
Wild through the dark colonnades and corridors
leafy the blast rang,
Breaking the seal of silence, and giving tongues to
the forest.
Soundless above them the banners of moss just
stirred to the music.
Multitudinous echoes awoke and died in the dis-
tance,
Over the watery floor, and beneath the reverberant
branches ;
But not a voice replied ; no answer came from the
darkness ;
And, when the echoes had ceased, like a sense of
pain was the silence.
Then Evangeline slept ; but the boatmen rowed
through the midnight,
Silent at times, then singing familiar Canadian
boat-songs,
Such as they sang of old on their own Acadian
rivers,
While through the night were heard the mysterious
sounds of the desert,
Far off,—indistinct,—as of wave or wind in the
forest,
Mixed with the whoop of the crane and the roar of
the grim alligator.

Thus ere another noon they emerged from the
shades ; and before them
Lay, in the golden sun, the lakes of the Atcha-
falaya.
Water-lilies in myriads rocked on the slight undu-
lations
Made by the passing oars, and, resplendent in
beauty, the lotus
Lifted her golden crown above the heads of the
boatmen.
Faint was the air with the odorous breath of mag-
nolia blossoms,
And with the heat of noon ; and numberless syl-
van islands,
Fragrant and thickly embowered with blossoming
hedges of roses,
Near to whose shores they glided along, invited to
slumber.
Soon by the fairest of these their weary oars were
suspended.
Under the boughs of Wachita willows, that grew
by the margin,
Safely their boat was moored ; and scattered about
on the greensward,
Tired with their midnight toil, the weary travellers
slumbered.
Over them vast and high extended the cope of a
cedar.
Swinging from its great arms, the trumpet-flower
and the grape-vine

Hung their ladder of ropes aloft like the ladder of Jacob,
On whose pendulous stairs the angels ascending,
descending,
Were the swift humming-birds, that flitted from blossom to blossom.
Such was the vision Evangeline saw as she slumbered beneath it.
Filled was her heart with love, and the dawn of an opening heaven
Lighted her soul in sleep with the glory of regions celestial.

Nearer and ever nearer, among the numberless islands,
Darted a light, swift boat, that sped away o'er the water,
Urged on its course by the sinewy arms of hunters and trappers.
Northward its prow was turned, to the land of the bison and beaver.
At the helm sat a youth, with countenance thoughtful and careworn.
Dark and neglected locks overshadowed his brow, and a sadness
Somewhat beyond his years on his face was legibly written.
Gabriel was it, who, weary with waiting, unhappy and restless,

Sought in the Western wilds oblivion of self and of sorrow.

Swiftly they glided along, close under the lee of the island,

But by the opposite bank, and behind a screen of palmettos,

So that they saw not the boat, where it lay concealed in the willows;

All undisturbed by the dash of their oars, and unseen, were the sleepers,

Angel of God was there none to awaken the slumbering maiden.

Swiftly they glided away, like the shade of a cloud on the prairie.

After the sound of their oars on the tholes had died in the distance,

As from a magic trance the sleepers awoke, and the maiden

Said with a sigh to the friendly priest, "O Father Felician!

Something says in my heart that near me Gabriel wanders.

Is it a foolish dream, an idle and vague superstition?

Or has an angel passed, and revealed the truth to my spirit?"

Then, with a blush, she added, "Alas for my credulous fancy!

Unto ears like thine such words as these have no meaning." *

But made answer the reverend man, and he smiled
as he answered, —
“ Daughter, thy words are not idle ; nor are they to
me without meaning.
Feeling is deep and still ; and the word that floats
on the surface
Is as the tossing buoy, that betrays where the an-
chor is hidden.
Therefore trust to thy heart, and to what the world
calls illusions.
Gabriel truly is near thee ; for not far away to the
southward,
On the banks of the Têche, are the towns of St.
Maur and St. Martin.
There the long-wandering bride shall be given
again to her bridegroom,
There the long-absent pastor regain his flock and
his sheepfold.
Beautiful is the land, with its prairies and forests of
fruit-trees ;
Under the feet a garden of flowers, and the bluest
of heavens
Bending above, and resting its dome on the walls of
the forest.
They who dwell there have named it the Eden of
Louisiana.”

With these words of cheer they arose and contin-
ued their journey.

Softly the evening came. The sun from the western horizon
Like a magician extended his golden wand o'er the landscape ;
Twinkling vapors arose ; and sky and water and forest
Seemed all on fire at the touch, and melted and mingled together.
Hanging between two skies, a cloud with edges of silver,
Floated the boat, with its dripping oars, on the motionless water.
Filled was Evangeline's heart with inexpressible sweetness.
Touched by the magic spell, the sacred fountains of feeling
Glowed with the light of love, as the skies and waters around her.
Then from a neighboring thicket the mocking-bird, wildest of singers,
Swinging aloft on a willow spray that hung o'er the water,
Shook from his little throat such floods of delirious music,
That the whole air and the woods and the waves seemed silent to listen.
Plaintive at first were the tones and sad ; then soaring to madness
Seemed they to follow or guide the revel of frenzied Bacchantes.

Single notes were then heard, in sorrowful, low
lamentation ;
Till, having gathered them all, he flung them abroad
in derision,
As when, after a storm, a gust of wind through the
tree-tops
Shakes down the rattling rain in a crystal shower
on the branches.
With such a prelude as this, and hearts that
throbbed with emotion,
Slowly they entered the Têche, where it flows
through the green Opelousas,
And, through the amber air, above the crest of the
woodland,
Saw the column of smoke that arose from a neigh-
boring dwelling ;—
Sounds of a horn they heard, and the distant lowing
of cattle.

III.

NEAR to the bank of the river, o'ershadowed by
oaks, from whose branches
Garlands of Spanish moss and of mystic mistletoe
flaunted,
Such as the Druids cut down with golden hatchets
at Yule-tide,

Stood, secluded and still, the house of the herdsman. A garden
Girded it round about with a belt of luxuriant blossoms,
Filling the air with fragrance. The house itself was
of timbers
Hewn from the cypress-tree, and carefully fitted
together.
Large and low was the roof; and on slender columns supported,
Rose-wreathed, vine-encircled, a broad and spacious
veranda,
Haunt of the humming-bird and the bee, extended
around it.
At each end of the house, amid the flowers of the
garden,
Stationed the dove-cots were, as love's perpetual
symbol,
Scenes of endless wooing, and endless contentions
of rivals.
Silence reigned o'er the place. The line of shadow
and sunshine
Ran near the tops of the trees; but the house itself
was in shadow,
And from its chimney-top, ascending and slowly
expanding
Into the evening air, a thin blue column of smoke
rose.
In the rear of the house, from the garden gate, ran
a pathway

Through the great groves of oak to the skirts of the
 limitless prairie,
Into whose sea of flowers the sun was slowly de-
 scending.
Full in his track of light, like ships with shadowy
 canvas
Hanging loose from their spars in a motionless calm
 in the tropics,
Stood a cluster of trees, with tangled cordage of
 grape-vines.

Just where the woodlands met the flowery surf of
 the prairie,
Mounted upon his horse, with Spanish saddle and
 stirrups,
Sat a herdsman, arrayed in gaiters and doublet of
 deerskin.
Broad and brown was the face that from under the
 Spanish sombrero
Gazed on the peaceful scene, with the lordly look
 of its master.
Round about him were numberless herds of kine,
 that were grazing
Quietly in the meadows, and breathing the vapory
 freshness
That uprose from the river, and spread itself over
 the landscape.
Slowly lifting the horn that hung at his side, and
 expanding

Fully his broad, deep chest, he blew a blast, that
resounded
Wildly and sweet and far, through the still damp
air of the evening.
Suddenly out of the grass the long white horns of
the cattle
Rose like flakes of foam on the adverse currents of
ocean.
Silent a moment they gazed, then bellowing rushed
o'er the prairie,
And the whole mass became a cloud, a shade in
the distance.
Then, as the herdsman turned to the house, through
the gate of the garden
Saw he the forms of the priest and the maiden
advancing to meet him.
Suddenly down from his horse he sprang in amaze-
ment, and forward
Rushed with extended arms and exclamations of
wonder ;
When they beheld his face, they recognized Basil
the blacksmith.
Hearty his welcome was, as **he** led his guests to the
garden.
There in an arbor of roses with endless question and
answer
Gave they vent to their hearts, and renewed their
friendly embraces,
Laughing and weeping by turns, or sitting silent
and thoughtful.

Thoughtful, for Gabriel came not ; and now dark
doubts and misgivings
Stole o'er the maiden's heart ; and Basil, somewhat
embarrassed,
Broke the silence and said, "If you came by the
Atchafalaya,
How have you nowhere encountered my Gabriel's
boat on the bayous ?"
Over Evangeline's face at the words of Basil a
shade passed.
Tears came into her eyes, and she said, with a
tremulous accent,
"Gone ? is Gabriel gone ?" and, concealing her
face on his shoulder,
All her o'erburdened heart gave way, and she wept
and lamented.
Then the good Basil said,— and his voice grew
blithe as he said it,—
"Be of good cheer, my child ; it is only to-day he
departed.
Foolish boy ! he has left me alone with my herds
and my horses.
Moody and restless grown, and tried and troubled,
his spirit
Could no longer endure the calm of this quiet exist-
ence.
Thinking ever of thee, uncertain and sorrowful
ever,
Ever silent, or speaking only of thee and his troub-
les,

He at length had become so tedious to men and to maidens,

Tedious even to me, that at length I bethought me, and sent him

Unto the town of Adayes to trade for mules with the Spaniards.

Thence he will follow the Indian trails to the Ozark Mountains,

Hunting for furs in the forests, on rivers trapping the beaver.

Therefore be of good cheer ; we will follow the fugitive lover ;

He is not far on his way, and the Fates and the streams are against him.

Up and away to-morrow, and through the red dew of the morning

We will follow him fast, and bring him back to his prison."

Then glad voices were heard, and up from the banks of the river,

Borne aloft on his comrades' arms, came Michael the fiddler.

Long under Basil's roof had he lived like a god on Olympus,

Having no other care than dispensing music to mortals.

Far renowned was he for his silver locks and his fiddle.

“Long live Michael,” they cried, “our brave Aca-
dian minstrel !”

As they bore him aloft in triumphal procession ;
and straightway

Father Felician advanced with Evangeline, greeting
the old man

Kindly and oft, and recalling the past, while Basil,
enraptured,

Hailed with hilarious joy his old companions and
gossips,

Laughing loud and long, and embracing mothers
and daughters.

Much they marvelled to see the wealth of the ci-
devant blacksmith,

All his domains and his herds, and his patriarchal
demeanor ;

Much they marvelled to hear his tales of the soil
and the climate,

And of the prairies, whose numberless herds were
his who would take them ;

Each one thought in his heart, that he, too, would
go and do likewise.

Thus they ascended the steps, and, crossing the
breezy veranda,

Entered the hall of the house, where already the
supper of Basil

Waited his late return ; and they rested and feasted
together.

Over the joyous feast the sudden darkness descended.

All was silent without, and, illumining the landscape with silver,

Fair rose the dewy moon and the myriad stars ; but within doors,

Brighter than these, shone the faces of friends in the glimmering lamplight.

Then from his station aloft, at the head of the table, the herdsman

Poured forth his heart and his wine together in endless profusion.

Lighting his pipe, that was filled with sweet Natchitoches tobacco,

Thus he spake to his guests, who listened, and smiled as they listened :—

“Welcome once more, my friends, who long have been friendless and homeless,

Welcome once more to a home, that is better perchance than the old one !

Here no hungry winter congeals our blood like the rivers ;

Here no stony ground provokes the wrath of the farmer.

Smoothly the ploughshare runs through the soil, as a keel through the water.

All the year round the orange-groves are in blossom ; and grass grows

More in a single night than a whole Canadian summer.

Here, too, numberless herds run wild and unclaimed
in the prairies ;
Here, too, lands may be had for the asking, and
forests of timber
With a few blows of the axe are hewn and framed
into houses.
After your houses are built, and your fields are yel-
low with harvests,
No King George of England shall drive you away
from your homesteads,
Burning your dwellings and barns, and stealing
your farms and your cattle.”
Speaking these words, he blew a wrathful cloud
from his nostrils,
While his huge, brown hand came thundering
down on the table,
So that the guests all started ; and Father Felician,
astounded,
Suddenly paused, with a pinch of snuff half-way to
his nostrils.
But the brave Basil resumed, and his words were
milder and gayer :—
“Only beware of the fever, my friends, beware of
the fever !
For it is not like that of our cold Acadian
climate,
Cured by wearing a spider hung round one’s neck
in a nutshell !”
Then there were voices heard at the door, and foot-
steps approaching

Sounded upon the stairs and the floor of the breezy veranda.

It was the neighboring Creoles and small Acadian planters,

Who had been summoned all to the house of Basil the Herdsman.

Merry the meeting was of ancient comrades and neighbors :

Friend clasped friend in his arms ; and they who before were as strangers,

Meeting in exile, became straightway as friends to each other,

Drawn by the gentle bond of a common country together.

But in the neighboring hall a strain of music, proceeding

From the accordant strings of Michael's melodious fiddle,

Broke up all further speech. Away, like children delighted,

All things forgotten beside, they gave themselves to the maddening

Whirl of the dizzy dance, as it swept and swayed to the music,

Dreamlike, with beaming eyes and the rush of fluttering garments.

Meanwhile, apart, at the head of the hall, the priest and the herdsman

Sat, conversing together of past and present and future ;
While Evangeline stood like one entranced, for within her Olden memories rose, and loud in the midst of the music Heard she the sound of the sea, and an irrepressible sadness Came o'er her heart, and unseen she stole forth into the garden. Beautiful was the night. Behind the black wall of the forest, Tipping its summit with silver, arose the moon. On the river Fell here and there through the branches a tremulous gleam of the moonlight, Like the sweet thoughts of love on a darkened and devious spirit. Nearer and round about her, the manifold flowers of the garden Poured out their souls in odors, that were their prayers and confessions Unto the night, as it went its way, like a silent Carthusian. Fuller of fragrance than they, and as heavy with shadows and night-dews, Hung the heart of the maiden. The calm and the magical moonlight Seemed to inundate her soul with indefinable longings,

As, through the garden gate, and beneath the shade
of the oak-trees,
Passed she along the path to the edge of the meas-
ureless prairie.
Silent it lay, with a silvery haze upon it, and fire-
flies
Gleaming and floating away in mingled and infinite
numbers.
Over her head the stars, the thoughts of God in the
heavens,
Shone on the eyes of man, who had ceased to mar-
vel and worship,
Save when a blazing comet was seen on the walls
of that temple,
As if a hand had appeared and written upon them,
“Upharsin.”
And the soul of the maiden, between the stars and
the fire-flies,
Wandered alone, and she cried, “O Gabriel! O
my beloved!
Art thou so near unto me, and yet I cannot behold
thee?
Art thou so near unto me, and yet thy voice does
not reach me?
Ah! how often thy feet have trod this path to the
prairie!
Ah! how often thine eyes have looked on the
woodlands around me!
Ah! how often beneath this oak, returning from
labor,

Thou hast lain down to rest, and to dream of me in
thy slumbers.
When shall these eyes behold, these arms be folded
about thee ? ”
Loud and sudden and near the note of a whippoor-
will sounded
Like a flute in the woods ; and anon, through the
neighboring thickets,
Farther and farther away it floated and dropped
into silence.
“ Patience ! ” whispered the oaks from oracular cav-
erns of darkness ;
And, from the moonlit meadow, a sigh responded,
“ To-morrow ! ”

Bright rose the sun next day ; and all the flowers
of the garden
Bathed his shining feet with their tears, and anoint-
ed his tresses
With the delicious balm that they bore in their
vases of crystal.
“ Farewell ! ” said the priest, as he stood at the
shadowy threshold ;
“ See that you bring us the Prodigal Son from his
fasting and famine,
And, too, the Foolish Virgin, who slept when the
bridegroom was coming.”
“ Farewell ! ” answered the maiden, and, smiling,
with Basil descended

Down to the river's brink, where the boatmen already were waiting.

Thus beginning their journey with morning, and sunshine, and gladness,

Swiftly they followed the flight of him who was speeding before them,

Blown by the blast of fate like a dead leaf over the desert.

Not that day, nor the next, nor yet the day that succeeded,

Found they trace of his course, in lake or forest or river,

Nor, after many days, had they found him ; but vague and uncertain

Rumors alone were their guides through a wild and desolate country ;

Till, at the little inn of the Spanish town of Adayes,

Weary and worn, they alighted, and learned from the garrulous landlord,

That on the day before, with horses and guides and companions,

Gabriel left the village, and took the road of the prairies.

IV.

FAR in the West there lies a desert land, where the mountains
Lift, through perpetual snows, their lofty and lumi-
nous summits.
Down from their jagged, deep ravines, where the
gorge, like a gateway,
Opens a passage rude to the wheels of the emi-
grant's wagon,
Westward the Oregon flows and the Walleway and
Owyhee.
Eastward, with devious course, among the Wind-
river Mountains,
Through the Sweet-water Valley precipitate leaps
the Nebraska ;
And to the south, from Fontaine-qui-bout and the
Spanish sierras,
Fretted with sands and rocks, and swept by the
wind of the desert,
Numberless torrents, with ceaseless sound, descend
to the ocean,
Like the great chords of a harp, in loud and solemn
vibrations.
Spreading between these streams are the wondrous,
beautiful prairies,
Billowy bays of grass ever rolling in shadow and
sunshine,

Bright with luxuriant clusters of roses and purple
amorphas.

Over them wandered the buffalo herds, and the elk
and the roebuck ;

Over them wandered the wolves, and herds of rider-
less horses ;

Fires that blast and blight, and winds that are
weary with travel ;

Over them wander the scattered tribes of Ishmael's
children,

Staining the desert with blood ; and above their
terrible war-trails

Circles and sails aloft, on pinions majestic, the vul-
ture,

Like the implacable soul of a chieftain slaughtered
in battle,

By invisible stairs ascending and scaling the heav-
ens.

Here and there rise smokes from the camps of
these savage marauders ;

Here and there rise groves from the margins of
swift-running rivers ;

And the grim, taciturn bear, the anchorite monk
of the desert,

Climbs down their dark ravines to dig for roots by
the brook-side,

And over all is the sky, the clear and crystalline
heaven,

Like the protecting hand of God inverted above
them.

Into this wonderful land, at the base of the Ozark Mountains,
Gabriel far had entered, with hunters and trappers behind him.
Day after day, with their Indian guides, the maiden and Basil
Followed his flying steps, and thought each day to o'ertake him.
Sometimes they saw, or thought they saw, the smoke of his camp-fire
Rise in the morning air from the distant plain ; but at nightfall,
When they had reached the place, they found only embers and ashes.
And, though their hearts were sad at times and their bodies were weary,
Hope still guided them on, as the magic Fata Morgana
Showed them her lakes of light, that retreated and vanished before them.

Once, as they sat by their evening fire, there silently entered
Into the little camp an Indian woman, whose features
Wore deep traces of sorrow, and patience as great as her sorrow.
She was a Shawnee woman returning home to her people,

From the far-off hunting-grounds of the cruel Ca-
manches,
Where her Canadian husband, a Coureur-des-Bois,
had been murdered.
Touched were their hearts at her story, and warm-
est and friendliest welcome
Gave they, with words of cheer, and she sat and
feasted among them
On the buffalo-meat and the venison cooked on the
embers.
But when their meal was done, and Basil and all
his companions,
Worn with the long day's march and the chase of
the deer and the bison,
Stretched themselves on the ground, and slept
where the quivering fire-light
Flashed on their swarthy cheeks, and their forms
wrapped up in their blankets,
Then at the door of Evangeline's tent she sat and
repeated
Slowly, with soft, low voice, and the charm of her
Indian accent,
All the tale of her love, with its pleasures, and
pains, and reverses.
Much Evangeline wept at the tale, and to know
that another
Hapless heart like her own had loved and had
been disappointed.
Moved to the depths of her soul by pity and wom-
an's compassion,

Yet in her sorrow pleased that one who had suffered was near her,
She in turn related her love and all its disasters.
Mute with wonder the Shawnee sat, and when she had ended
Still was mute ; but at length, as if a mysterious horror
Passed through her brain, she spake, and repeated the tale of the Mowis ;
Mowis, the bridegroom of snow, who won and wedded a maiden,
But, when the morning came, arose and passed from the wigwam,
Fading and melting away and dissolving into the sunshine,
Till she beheld him no more, though she followed far into the forest.
Then, in those sweet, low tones, that seemed like a weird incantation,
Told she the tale of the fair Lilinau, who was wooed by a phantom,
That, through the pines o'er her father's lodge, in the hush of the twilight,
Breathed like the evening wind, and whispered love to the maiden,
Till she followed his green and waving plume through the forest,
And never more returned, nor was seen again by her people.

Silent with wonder and strange surprise, Evangeline listened
To the soft flow of her magical words, till the region around her
Seemed like enchanted ground, and her swarthy guest the enchantress.
Slowly over the tops of the Ozark Mountains the moon rose,
Lighting the little tent, and with a mysterious splendor
Touching the sombre leaves, and embracing and filling the woodland.
With a delicious sound the brook rushed by, and the branches
Swayed and sighed overhead in scarcely audible whispers.
Filled with the thoughts of love was Evangeline's heart, but a secret,
Subtile sense crept in of pain and indefinite terror,
As the cold, poisonous snake creeps into the nest of the swallow.
It was no earthly fear.  A breath from the region of spirits
Seemed to float in the air of night; and she felt for a moment
That, like the Indian maid, she, too, was pursuing a phantom.
With this thought she slept, and the fear and the phantom had vanished.

Early upon the morrow the march was resumed ;
and the Shawnee
Said, as they journeyed along, “On the western
slope of these mountains
Dwells in his little village the Black Robe chief of
the Mission.
Much he teaches the people, and tells them of
Mary and Jesus ;
Loud laugh their hearts with joy, and weep with
pain, as they hear him.”
Then, with a sudden and secret emotion, Evange-
line answered,
“Let us go to the Mission, for there good tidings
await us !”
Thither they turned their steeds ; and behind a
spur of the mountains,
Just as the sun went down, they heard a murmur of
voices,
And in a meadow green and broad, by the bank of
a river,
Saw the tents of the Christians, the tents of the
Jesuit Mission.
Under a towering oak, that stood in the midst of
the village,
Knelt the Black Robe chief with his children. A
crucifix fastened
High on the trunk of the tree, and overshadowed
by grape-vines,
Looked with its agonized face on the multitude
kneeling beneath it.

This was their rural chapel. Aloft, through the intricate arches
Of its aerial roof, arose the chant of their vespers,
Mingling its notes with the soft susurrus and sighs
of the branches. ✓
Silent, with heads uncovered, the travellers, nearer
approaching,
Knelt on the swarded floor, and joined in the evening devotions.
But when the service was done, and the benediction had fallen
Forth from the hands of the priest, like seed from
the hands of the sower,
Slowly the reverend man advanced to the strangers,
and bade them
Welcome ; and when they replied, he smiled with
benignant expression,
Hearing the homelike sounds of his mother-tongue
in the forest,
And, with words of kindness, conducted them into
his wigwam.
There upon mats and skins they reposed, and on
cakes of the maize-ear
Feasted, and slaked their thirst from the water-gourd of the teacher.
Soon was their story told ; and the priest with solemnity answered :—
“ Not six suns have risen and set since Gabriel,
seated

On this mat by my side, where now the maiden
 reposes,

Told me this same sad tale ; then arose and con-
 tinued his journey ! ”

Soft was the voice of the priest, and he spake with
 an accent of kindness ;

But on Evangeline’s heart fell his words as in win-
 ter the snow-flakes

Fall into some lone nest from which the birds have
 departed.

“ Far to the north he has gone,” continued the
 priest ; “ but in autumn,

When the chase is done, will return again to the
 Mission.”

Then Evangeline said, and her voice was meek
 and submissive,

“ Let me remain with thee, for my soul is sad and
 afflicted.”

So seemed it wise and well unto all ; and betimes
 on the morrow,

Mounting his Mexican steed, with his Indian guides
 and companions,

Homeward Basil returned, and Evangeline stayed
 at the Mission.

Slowly, slowly, slowly the days succeeded each
 other, —

Days and weeks and months ; and the fields of
 maize that were springing

Green from the ground when a stranger she came,
now waving above her,
Lifted their slender shafts, with leaves interlacing,
and forming
Cloisters for mendicant crows and granaries pil-
laged by squirrels.
Then in the golden weather the maize was husked,
and the maidens
Blushed at each blood-red ear, for that betokened
a lover,
But at the crooked laughed, and called it a thief in
the corn-field.
Even the blood-red ear to *Evangeline* brought not
her lover.
“Patience!” the priest would say; “have faith,
and thy prayer will be answered!
Look at this delicate plant that lifts its head from
the meadow,
See how its leaves are turned to the north, as true
as the magnet;
This is the compass-flower, that the finger of God
has planted
Here in the houseless wild, to direct the traveller’s
journey
Over the sea-like, pathless, limitless waste of the
desert.
Such in the soul of man is faith. The blossoms of
passion,
Gay and luxuriant flowers, are brighter and fuller
of fragrance,

But they beguile us, and lead us astray, and their
odor is deadly.

Only this humble plant can guide us here, and
hereafter

Crown us with asphodel flowers, that are wet with
the dews of nepenthe.”

So came the autumn, and passed, and the win-
ter,— yet Gabriel came not;

Blossomed the opening spring, and the notes of the
robin and bluebird

Sounded sweet upon wold and in wood, yet Gabriel
came not.

But on the breath of the summer winds a rumor was
wafted

Sweeter than song of bird, or hue or odor of blos-
som.

Far to the north and east, it said, in the Michigan
forests,

Gabriel had his lodge by the banks of the Saginaw
river.

And, with returning guides, that sought the lakes
of St. Lawrence,

Saying a sad farewell, Evangeline went from the
Mission.

When over weary ways, by long and perilous
marches,

She had attained at length the depths of the Michi-
gan forests,

Found she the hunter's lodge deserted and fallen to
ruin !

Thus did the long sad years glide on, and in
seasons and places
Divers and distant far was seen the wandering
maiden ;—
Now in the Tents of Grace of the meek Moravian
Missions,
Now in the noisy camps and the battle-fields of the
army,
Now in secluded hamlets, in towns and populous
cities.
Like a phantom she came, and passed away unre-
membered.
Fair was she and young, when in hope began the
long journey ;
Faded was she and old, when in disappointment it
ended.
Each succeeding year stole something away from
her beauty,
Leaving behind it, broader and deeper, the gloom
and the shadow.
Then there appeared and spread faint streaks of
gray o'er her forehead,
Dawn of another life, that broke o'er her earthly
horizon,
As in the eastern sky the first faint streaks of the
morning.

V.

IN that delightful land which is washed by the
Delaware's waters,
Guarding in sylvan shades the name of Penn the
apostle,
Stands on the banks of its beautiful stream the
city he founded.
There all the air is balm, and the peach is the
emblem of beauty,
And the streets still re-echo the names of the trees
of the forest,
As if they fain would appease the Dryads whose
haunts they molested.
There from the troubled sea had Evangeline landed,
an exile,
Finding among the children of Penn a home and a
country.
There old René Leblanc had died ; and when he
departed,
Saw at his side only one of all his hundred de-
scendants.
Something at least there was in the friendly streets
of the city,
Something that spake to her heart, and made her
no longer a stranger ;
And her ear was pleased with the Thee and Thou
of the Quakers,

For it recalled the past, the old Acadian country,

Where all men were equal, and all were brothers and sisters.

So, when the fruitless search, the disappointed endeavor,

Ended, to recommence no more upon earth, uncomplaining,

Thither, as leaves to the light, were turned her thoughts and her footsteps.

As from a mountain's top the rainy mists of the morning

Roll away, and afar we behold the landscape below us, /

Sun-illumined, with shining rivers and cities and hamlets,

So fell the mists from her mind, and she saw the world far below her,

Dark no longer, but all illumined with love ; and the pathway

Which she had climbed so far, lying smooth and fair in the distance.

Gabriel was not forgotten. Within her heart was his image,

Clothed in the beauty of love and youth, as last she beheld him,

Only more beautiful made by his deathlike silence and absence.

Into her thoughts of him time entered not, for it was not.

Over him years had no power ; he was not changed,
but transfigured ;
He had become to her heart as one who is dead,
and not absent ;
Patience and abnegation of self, and devotion to
others,
This was the lesson a life of trial and sorrow had
taught her.
So was her love diffused, but, like to some odorous
spices,
Suffered no waste nor loss, though filling the air
with aroma.
Other hope had she none, nor wish in life, but to
follow
Meekly, with reverent steps, the sacred feet of her
Saviour.
Thus many years she lived as a Sister of Mercy ;
frequenting
Lonely and wretched roofs in the crowded lanes
of the city,
Where distress and want concealed themselves
from the sunlight,
Where disease and sorrow in garrets languished
neglected.
Night after night, when the world was asleep, as
the watchman repeated
Loud, through the gusty streets, that all was well
in the city,
High at some lonely window he saw the light of
her taper.

Day after day, in the gray of the dawn, as slow
through the suburbs
Plodded the German farmer, with flowers and fruits
for the market,
Met he that meek, pale face, returning home from
its watchings.

Then it came to pass that a pestilence fell on the
city,
Presaged by wondrous signs, and mostly by flocks
of wild pigeons,
Darkening the sun in their flight, with naught in
their crows but an acorn.
And, as the tides of the sea arise in the month of
September,
Flooding some silver stream, till it spreads to a
lake in the meadow,
So death flooded life, and, o'erflowing its natural
margin,
Spread to a brackish lake, the silver stream of
existence.
Wealth had no power to bribe, nor beauty to charm,
the oppressor ;
But all perished alike beneath the scourge of his
anger ; —
Only, alas ! the poor, who had neither friends nor
attendants,
Crept away to die in the almshouse, home of the
homeless.

Then in the suburbs it stood, in the midst of meadows and woodlands ;—
Now the city surrounds it ; but still, with its gateway and wicket
Meek, in the midst of splendor, its humble walls
seem to echo
Softly the words of the Lord :—“ The poor ye
always have with you.”
Thither, by night and by day, came the Sister of
Mercy. The dying
Looked up into her face, and thought, indeed, to
behold there
Gleams of celestial light encircle her forehead with
splendor,
Such as the artist paints o'er the brows of saints
and apostles,
Or such as hangs by night o'er a city seen at a
distance.
Unto their eyes it seemed the lamps of the city
celestial,
Into whose shining gates erelong their spirits would
enter.

Thus, on a Sabbath morn, through the streets,
deserted and silent,
Wending her quiet way, she entered the door of
the almshouse.
Sweet on the summer air was the odor of flowers
in the garden ;

And she paused on her way to gather the fairest
among them,

That the dying once more might rejoice in their
fragrance and beauty.

Then, as she mounted the stairs to the corridors,
cooled by the east wind,

Distant and soft on her ear fell the chimes from
the belfry of Christ Church,

While, intermingled with these, across the meadows
were wafted

Sounds of psalms, that were sung by the Swedes in
their church at Wicaco.

Soft as descending wings fell the calm of the hour
on her spirit;

Something within her said, "At length thy trials are
ended";

And, with light in her looks, she entered the cham-
bers of sickness.

Noiselessly moved about the assiduous, careful at-
tendants,

Moistening the feverish lip, and the aching brow,
and in silence

Closing the sightless eyes of the dead, and conceal-
ing their faces,

Where on their pallets they lay, like drifts of snow
by the roadside.

Many a languid head, upraised as *Evangeline*
entered,

Turned on its pillow of pain to gaze while she
passed, for her presence

Fell on their hearts like a ray of the sun on the
walls of a prison.
And, as she looked around, she saw how Death,
the consoler,
Laying his hand upon many a heart, had healed it
forever.
Many familiar forms had disappeared in the night-
time ;
Vacant their places were, or filled already by stran-
gers.

Suddenly, as if arrested by fear or a feeling of
wonder,
Still she stood, with her colorless lips apart, while
a shudder
Ran through her frame, and, forgotten, the flow-
erets dropped from her fingers,
And from her eyes and cheeks the light and bloom
of the morning.
Then there escaped from her lips a cry of such ter-
rible anguish,
That the dying heard it, and started up from their
pillows.
On the pallet before her was stretched the form of
an old man.
Long, and thin, and gray were the locks that shad-
ed his temples ;
But, as he lay in the morning light, his face for a
moment

Seemed to assume once more the forms of its earlier manhood ;
So are wont to be changed the faces of those who are dying.
Hot and red on his lips still burned the flush of the fever,
As if life, like the Hebrew, with blood had been sprinkled its portals,
That the Angel of Death might see the sign, and pass over. . .
Motionless, senseless, dying, he lay, and his spirit exhausted
Seemed to be sinking down through infinite depths in the darkness,
Darkness of slumber and death, forever sinking and sinking.
Then through those realms of shade, in multiplied reverberations,
Heard he that cry of pain, and through the hush that succeeded
Whispered a gentle voice, in accents tender and saint-like,
“Gabriel ! O my beloved !” and died away into silence.
Then he beheld, in a dream, once more the home of his childhood ;
Green Acadian meadows, with sylvan rivers among them,
Village, and mountain, and woodlands ; and, walking under their shadow,

As in the days of her youth, Evangeline rose in his vision.

Tears came into his eyes ; and as slowly he lifted his eyelids,

Vanished the vision away, but Evangeline knelt by his bedside.

Vainly he strove to whisper her name, for the accents unuttered

Died on his lips, and their motion revealed what his tongue would have spoken.

Vainly he strove to rise ; and Evangeline, kneeling beside him,

Kissed his dying lips, and laid his head on her bosom.

Sweet was the light of his eyes ; but it suddenly sank into darkness,

As when a lamp is blown out by a gust of wind at a casement.

All was ended now, the hope, and the fear, and the sorrow,

All the aching of heart, the restless, unsatisfied longing,

All the dull, deep pain, and constant anguish of patience !

And, as she pressed once more the lifeless head to her bosom,

Meekly she bowed her own, and murmured, " Father, I thank thee ! "

STILL stands the forest primeval ; but far away
from its shadow,
Side by side, in their nameless graves, the lovers
are sleeping.
Under the humble walls of the little Catholic
churchyard,
In the heart of the city, they lie, unknown and
unnoticed.
Daily the tides of life go ebbing and flowing beside
them,
Thousands of throbbing hearts, where theirs are at
rest and forever,
Thousands of aching brains, where theirs no longer
are busy,
Thousands of toiling hands, where theirs have
ceased from their labors,
Thousands of weary feet, where theirs have com-
pleted their journey !

Still stands the forest primeval ; but under the
shade of its branches
Dwells another race, with other customs and lan-
guage.
Only along the shore of the mournful and misty
Atlantic
Linger a few Acadian peasants, whose fathers from
exile

